(d) the details of dates and schedule for such utilization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) to (d) Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL)'s actual crude throughput for the period April to October, 2002 was 4.18 million metric tonnes, which is 74% of the installed capacity of 9.69 million metric tonnes per annum. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has submitted a proposal to the Government to acquire majority stake in MRPL. As per the proposal of ONGC, capacity utilisation of MRPL is expected to improve. No decision has been taken by the Government as yet.

Sharing of Rise in Crude Prices

1470. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have asked the State-owned oil marketing firms to share the burden of increased global crude prices and not pass it all to the consumers;

(b) if so, whether it has been pointed out that oil companies cannot increase the prices fortnightly by 25—30 paise in tandem with global prices to keep their rate of returns intact;

(c) if so, what are the other communications forwarded to these companies; and

(d) to what extent they have agreed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Special dividend by ONGC

1471. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be please to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned ONGC may give Government Rs. 10,000 Crore special payout which appeared in the Economic Times dated the 12th November, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that ONGC is being compelled to announce the Special Dividend by Government through a Presidential Directive;

(d) whether it is also a fact that this payout would disable the company from executing its future plans, which include its equity in Sudanese oil companies and bidding in oil exploration blocks; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) to (c) the news-item appeared in the Economic times dated the 12th November, 2002 has been brought to the notice of the Government. However, Government has not issued any Presidential Directive to ONGC regarding payment of Special Dividend to the Government.

(d) and (e) Does not arise in view of above reply.

Cut in import Bill

1472. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a spurt in international crude oil prices resulting in increase in oil import bill;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the details regarding the demand and supply position, actual revenue outgo and domestic collection in respect of petroleum products, during the last three years; and

(d) the proposal, if any, for minimising import bill?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) and (b) A comparison of the quantity and value of crude oil imports for the period April-October 2002 with the period April-October 2001 is given below :

	April—October 2002		April—October 2001	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
	(TMT)*	(Rs. crore)	(TMT)*	(Rs. crore)
	49,294	44,368	45,714	38,197

* TMT : Thousand Metric Tonnes.